

### **1. What year was Meriwether Lewis born?**

1774. Meriwether Lewis was born in Albermarle County, Virginia, on August 18, 1774.

Meriwether's father was Lieutenant William Lewis. William fought in the Revolutionary War, and in 1779, he died of pneumonia. Meriwether's mother was Lucy Meriwether Lewis Marks. She taught Meriwether about the natural world such as trees, shrubs, birds, and insects. Meriwether and his mother remained close. In 1780, Meriwether's mother married Captain John Marks. Marks introduced Meriwether to the wilderness. When Meriwether was eight years old, he and Marks went to Georgia to help establish a new settlement.

When Meriwether Lewis was twenty-one years old, he joined the U.S. Army. Within a year, he was assigned to an elite company of riflemen. His captain was William Clark. Lewis and Clark had many similarities. They were both from Virginia. They both had extensive wilderness experiences. They both had served in the militia and the U.S. Army. They were both six feet tall. Lewis and Clark were also different. Lewis was quieter, more thoughtful, and moody. Clark was outgoing and even-tempered. Lewis was better educated. Clark had been raised to be a man of action.

**Did you know** Meriwether Lewis was President Jefferson's personal secretary when he was chosen to lead the Lewis and Clark Expedition?

### **2. What year was William Clark born?**

1770. William Clark was born in Caroline County, Virginia, on August 1, 1770. He was the youngest of six sons and the ninth child in a family of ten. When Clark was fourteen, he moved with his family to Louisville, Kentucky. William Clark's older brother was George Rogers Clark. George was a Revolutionary War hero. In Kentucky, George taught William about soldiering, wilderness skills, and American Indians.

In 1789, Clark joined the Kentucky militia, and in 1791, he joined the U.S. Army. In 1795, Clark was given command of an elite rifle company at Fort Greenville, Ohio. One of the men in this company was Meriwether Lewis. Lewis and Clark had many similarities. They were both from Virginia. They both had extensive wilderness experiences. They both had served in the militia and the U.S. Army. They were both six feet tall. Lewis and Clark were also different. Lewis was quieter, more thoughtful, and moody. Clark was outgoing and even-tempered. Lewis was better educated. Clark had been raised to be a man of action.

### **3. Which of the following was the goal of the Lewis & Clark Expedition?**

- a) Find the Fountain of Youth**
- b) Explore the Seven Cities of Gold**
- c) Explore the North Pole**
- d) Find a water route across America to the Pacific Ocean**

d) Find a water route across America to the Pacific Ocean. Before Thomas Jefferson became president, he tried three times to organize expeditions to the land west of the Mississippi River. He was interested in discovering new plants, animals, and minerals. In 1803, Jefferson became President of the United States, and he formed this expedition.

The goal of the expedition was to find a water route across America to the Pacific Ocean. As Jefferson stated, the aim of the expedition would be to explore the Missouri River to find "the most direct and practicable water communication across the continent for purposes of commerce."

The official name of the expedition was the Corps of Discovery. The team was to chart their course using the sun and moon, observe and learn from the American Indians, and to note and record plant life, animal life, and the mineral resources.

Thomas Jefferson choose Meriwether Lewis to lead the expedition. To prepare for the journey, Lewis met with Andrew Ellicot (an astronomer and mathematician), Albert Gallatin (a map collector), and Dr. Benjamin Rush (a physician). Lewis took lessons in botany from Dr. Benjamin Smith Barton, and collected books on science and geography.

In June, 1803, Lewis asked William Clark to co-command the Corps of Discovery. This expedition was a military venture, and shared command is rare in the military. In this case, however, it worked. Lewis and Clark worked as a team, and there is no record of any serious disagreements between them.

At the time Lewis and Clark were preparing for their expedition, the map of the continent was empty in the west. From the east, fur trappers had sailed up the Missouri River as far as present-day North Dakota. From the west, merchant ships had sailed up the Columbia River. The territory in between North Dakota and the Columbia River was unknown to the United States or Europe. This was the area Lewis and Clark would explore and chart.

Maps showed the Missouri River started near the mountains in the west and headed east. Maps also showed the Columbia River started near the same mountains and headed west. Lewis and Clark were hopeful these two rivers started near each other. This way traders in boats could travel back and forth with ease across the continent. Lewis and Clark would soon realize the mountains in between the two rivers were not a short distance apart. Instead, the steep Rocky Mountains lay in between.

Lewis and Clark brought compasses and other navigating and map-making devices. Lewis invented a watertight container made of lead to hold gunpowder, and he designed a new rifle for the journey. They brought the best medicines available at the time, flannel shirts, blankets, and backpacks. They also brought presents for the American Indians, including mirrors, tobacco, brass kettles, and 4,600 sewing needles.

On August 31, 1803, Lewis left Pittsburgh and traveled down the Ohio River. Two months later, he met Clark in Indiana. Lewis and Clark recruited twenty-seven members, including soldiers, woodsmen, and farmers. They set up winter camp in Illinois, near where the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers meet.

#### **4. What year did the Lewis and Clark Expedition begin from St. Louis?**

1804. The Lewis and Clark Expedition left St. Louis on May 14, 1804. They headed west up the Missouri River.

The expedition used a keelboat to travel up the Missouri River. In the early 1800's, a keelboat was the preferred craft for rivers. Their keelboat was 55 feet long and 8 feet wide. Its mast was 32 feet tall and had a square sail. There were eleven benches for the oarsmen. The expedition also used pirogues (large flat-bottomed rowboats) and canoes they made from the trunks of cottonwood trees.

Most of the time, Clark traveled on the keelboat and Lewis walked on the shore. Every morning hunting parties went out on horseback and returned to the boats by nightfall.

Traveling up the Missouri River was difficult because it was against the strong current. When the winds were favorable, they used the sails to glide. Most of the time, however, the men had to use their muscles to move the boats. They either paddled with oars, pulled from shore with towropes, or walked through knee-deep water hauling the boats behind them. The summer brought heat and mosquitoes. On a good day, they traveled about 20 miles.

By the end of October, 1804, the expedition arrived at the Mandan and Hidatsa villages. This is located about 60 miles upriver from present-day Bismarck, North Dakota. They built a fort near the villages for their winter camp. It was called Fort Mandan. They spent the winter making repairs and preparing for their departure in the spring.

### **5. Where did Lewis and Clark meet Sacagawea?**

At Fort Mandan. During the winter of 1804-1805, the expedition camped near the Mandan and Hidatsa Indians. A fur trapper named Toussaint Charbonneau was living with the Mandan and Hidatsa. Lewis and Clark recruited Charbonneau to act as an interpreter. Charbonneau brought his wife, Sacagawea. **Did you know** Sacagawea means "bird woman" in the Shoshone language?

Sacagawea was a Shoshone. She was pregnant with her first child. On February 13, 1805, Sacagawea gave birth to her son, Jean Baptiste. He was known as Pompy or Little Pomp. Sacagawea carried Pompy on her back during the entire journey to and from the Pacific Ocean.

Sacagawea played an important role in the Lewis and Clark Expedition. She was familiar with the land and the languages so she served as a guide and interpreter. She also saved equipment and journals when one of their boats tipped over.

Sacagawea probably died in 1812. After her death, William Clark raised Pompy and her daughter, Lisette. Today, Sacagawea and Pompy are pictured on the Golden Dollar Coin.

### **6. How many members were a part of the Lewis and Clark Expedition from Fort Mandan to the Pacific Ocean?**

**a) Two (Lewis and Clark); b) Thirty-three; c) Ninety; d) One hundred and fifty-two**

b) Thirty-three. Lewis and Clark sent a group of soldiers on the keelboat to report back to Thomas Jefferson in Washington, D.C. On April 7, 1805, the Lewis and Clark Expedition left Fort Mandan. There were thirty-three people traveling up the Missouri River in six canoes and two pirogues.

In June, 1805, the expedition came across the Great Falls of the Missouri River. The approaching men could hear the roar of the waterfalls from 7 miles away. Their boats could not go over the falls, and they had to portage around them. They made wagons to carry their supplies across ravines and up steep slopes. The journey was slowed as sharp prickly pear thorns and jagged rocks stuck in the men's feet. It would take the expedition almost four weeks to travel about 18 miles as they carried their boats overland and around the falls.

The next big challenge for the expedition was crossing the Rocky Mountains. They were hopeful the Shoshone living in the area would supply them with horses for the journey. First, they would have to find the Shoshone, and second, they would have to convince the Shoshone to give them the much needed horses.

Fortunately for Lewis and Clark, Sacagawea was a Shoshone. She had been separated from her people when she was a little girl. Sacagawea began to recognize familiar landmarks as they neared the Shoshone's land. On August 13, 1805, Lewis and a small group scouted ahead and found the Shoshone. Lewis told the Shoshone warriors the expedition was a peaceful party. Four days later, Clark and the rest of the expedition caught up with Lewis and the Shoshone.

Now that they found the Shoshone, they must convince them to give them horses. Again, luck was on the side of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Not only was Sacagawea a Shoshone, but she was the sister of the Shoshone Chief. His name was Chief Cameahwait. When Sacagawea was brought forward to interpret the talks, she recognized her brother. Sacagawea and Cameahwait were reunited, and the Shoshones supplied Lewis and Clark with horses and guides to lead them over the Rocky Mountains.

By August 26, 1805, the expedition experienced freezing temperatures in the Rocky Mountains. They climbed up steeped slopes and down deep gorges. When they reached a high peak, they saw more snow-covered mountains in front of them. Their food was becoming scarce.

Clark and a few men scouted ahead looking for the Nez Percé. They found the Nez Percé, and Lewis and the rest of the men soon followed. The Nez Percé were friendly people who supplied the hungry expedition with salmon, berries, and roots. The Nez Percé also helped the expedition to build boats for the next leg of the journey.

## **7. When did the Lewis and Clark Expedition see the Pacific Ocean?**

November 7, 1805. On this day, Clark wrote in his journal, "Ocian in view. O! the joy." Lewis and Clark carved their names in a tree near the mouth of the Columbia River and wrote, "By land from the U. States in 1804 & 1805."

In early October, 1805, the Lewis and Clark Expedition had crossed the Rocky Mountains and was back on the water. This time, they were traveling downstream. They traveled on the Clearwater, Snake, and Columbia Rivers. The Columbia River would take them to the Pacific Ocean.

They saw signs they were close to the Pacific Ocean. Indians carried copper kettles and wore sailors' jackets. This meant they had traded with coastal Indians. After riding a 55-mile stretch of

the rough waters of the Columbia River, they reached the Pacific Ocean. Clark estimated they had traveled more than 4,100 miles from their starting point in Illinois.

The Lewis and Clark expedition planned to spend the winter at the Pacific Ocean. The only question was whether they would build a fort on the Pacific Ocean or move up the Columbia River. If they stayed on the Pacific Ocean, they had a small chance of making contact with an American or British trading ship. The expedition could send their reports back to Thomas Jefferson in Washington, D.C. If they moved up the Columbia River, the food would be more abundant.

This expedition was a military expedition. As military leaders, Lewis and Clark could have decided by themselves which location the expedition would camp. Instead, Lewis and Clark put it to a vote. In this vote, both York (a black slave) and Sacagawea (a woman) were allowed to vote. This was the first time a black slave or a woman had voted in American history. Also interesting, this vote did not occur on United States soil because this territory was not part of the United States in 1805.

The expedition voted to build a fort near the Pacific Ocean. They started building Fort Clatsop by December 7, 1805, and they moved in on Christmas Eve. Today, Fort Clatsop is near Astoria, Oregon.

The winter was cold and rainy. Between November 4, 1805, and March 25, 1806, they had only twelve days without rain. They spent some of their time making salt to preserve the meat. They made salt by boiling down the salty seawater and scraping the sides of the large kettles to obtain the salt.

Clark was the main mapmaker for the expedition, and he worked on mapping the country they had traveled. Although they used the best navigational tools available, they usually guessed the distance from one point to another. Sometimes they used a two pole chain to measure short distances. A two pole chain was a 33-foot chain stretched between two sticks. Soon, the expedition was mapping the continent. Before their trip, most maps marked a single mountain range that was easy to cross. After their trip, the maps reflected a series of mountain chains. As Lewis and Clark know first hand, these mountains were difficult to cross. The Lewis and Clark maps also show the continent was much wider than previously thought.

Lewis made notes of the plants, trees, and animals he observed. He wrote about eleven birds, eleven mammals, and two fish then unknown to naturalists. He described the wolverine and the California condor. **Did you know** the California condor is the largest bird in North America?

### **8. When did the Lewis and Clark Expedition leave the Pacific Ocean and return east?**

March 23, 1806. The expedition left the Pacific Ocean on March 23, 1806, and headed back up the Columbia River. By May, they were back with the Nez Percé. They stayed with the Nez Percé for six weeks waiting for the snow to melt in the mountains.

After crossing the Bitterroots, Lewis and Clark split up the expedition so they could cover more territory. Lewis took a small group and explored the Marias River, and Clark took most of the

expedition and traveled the Yellowstone River. Lewis and his group encountered the Blackfeet Indians. On July 26, 1806, Lewis' party woke up and found Blackfeet trying to steal their horses and guns. A fight broke out, and two Blackfeet were killed. Lewis and his men continued to the Missouri River.

In mid-August, 1806, the expedition returned to the Mandan villages. The return trip on the Missouri River was faster because they traveled with the current. They could cover 70 to 80 miles a day. Each day, the expedition met traders heading upstream. Already, they could see the Missouri River becoming more traveled.

On September 23, 1806, the Corps of Discovery arrived in St. Louis. After two years, their successful journey was completed. The expedition had traveled up the Missouri River to its source in the Rocky Mountains, crossed the Rocky Mountains, traveled down the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean, and returned.

Lewis wrote a long letter to Thomas Jefferson. The good news was the expedition was home, the West was rich in resources, and the rivers were full of animals. The bad news was there was no easy water route through the mountains to the Pacific Ocean.

Congress doubled the pay the members of the expedition and gave them 320 acres of land. However, two people received nothing. They were York and Sacagawea.

After the expedition, Meriwether Lewis became governor of the Louisiana Territory. He never finished writing his final report. On October 11, 1809, Lewis took his own life near Nashville, Tennessee. He is buried outside Hohenwald, Tennessee, along the Natchez Trace Parkway.

After the expedition, William Clark became the superintendent of Indian affairs for the Louisiana Territory. In 1813, he became governor of the newly formed Missouri Territory. As superintendent and governor, Clark worked to protect Indians during the westward expansion of the United States. He married Julia "Judith" Hancock. **Did you know** this is the same woman for whom he named a river in the West? They named their first son Meriwether Lewis Clark. On September 1, 1838, Clark died. He was 69 years old.

The members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition were the first U.S. citizens to see the Rocky Mountains, cross the continent, and reach the Pacific Ocean. The successful expedition strengthened U.S. claims to the Pacific Northwest, spurred westward expansion, and established good relations with most of the Indian tribes they met. The American West was now open to the people of the United States.

### **What I Learned Section 2 -- Define the following words:**

**Botany:** The study of plants

**Compass:** An instrument for determining directions with a magnetic needle that always points north



**Flora and Fauna:** Flora is the plants of a certain region, and fauna is the animals of a certain region

**Keelboat:** A shallow-bottomed boat used on rivers

**Pirogue:** A large, flat-bottomed rowboat

**Portage:** Carrying boats and other goods overland from one waterway to another

**a. What was the official name of the Lewis and Clark Expedition?**

The Corps of Discovery. Congress set aside \$2,500 to pay for the Lewis and Clark expedition. The trip ended up costing \$39,000.

In the 1800's, the vast area between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean was largely uncharted by Europeans and the United States. Different American Indian tribes lived throughout this land. Some lived on the prairie, some lived near the mountains, some lived in the desert, and some lived near the ocean. Countries such as Spain, France, Great Britain, Russia, and the United States wanted to claim as much of this territory as they could. Thomas Jefferson believed if the United States explored this land first, they would have a better claim to it.

**b. What is the Louisiana Purchase?**

In 1803, the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France. This purchase is called the Louisiana Purchase.

In 1800, the United States stretched from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River. Most of population lived near the Atlantic Ocean. Some adventurous settlers moved all the way to present-day Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

The Louisiana Territory stretched from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. It consisted of 828,000 square miles of land.

In July, 1803, the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France for \$15 million. This purchase is called the Louisiana Purchase. It doubled the size of the United States. The Lewis and Clark Expedition would now be exploring and charting territory belonging to the United States.

**c. Why did the Lewis and Clark Expedition keep journals during the expedition?**

To record and document their journey.

Lewis and Clark and seven of the expedition members used journals to record and document their journey. Because the expedition occurred before the invention of cameras, they sketched pictures in their journals of animals, plants, and landscapes. Some of the animals they saw included buffalo, deer, elk, antelopes, pelicans, coyotes, prairie dogs, moose, bighorn sheep, grizzly bears, whales, and the California condor. The expedition charted distances and mapped the land. Lewis and Clark also sent samples of flora and fauna to Thomas Jefferson. **Did you**

**know** Lewis and Clark described 178 plants and 122 animal species and subspecies never before cataloged?

**d. Describe ONE of the following people or animals:**

● **Thomas Jefferson:** He was the third President of the United States. He served two terms from 1801 to 1809. **Did you know** Thomas Jefferson was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence? During Jefferson's presidency, the Lewis and Clark Expedition successfully traveled to the Pacific Ocean and back.

● **Andrew Ellicot:** The nation's leading astronomer and mathematician who met with Meriwether Lewis before the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

● **Albert Gallatin:** A map collector who met with Meriwether Lewis before the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

● **Dr. Benjamin Rush:** An eminent physician who met with Meriwether Lewis before the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He gave Lewis a list of "health rules." He told Lewis to have the men wear flannel, especially in the winter, and to have the men lie down when they were tired.

● **Dr. Benjamin Smith Barton:** He gave lessons in botany to Meriwether Lewis before the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

● **George Drouillard:** A member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He was a trapper and hunter, and he knew Indian sign language.

● **York:** A member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He was Clark's slave. In the winter of 1805, he was the first American slave to vote. After the Expedition, York was given his freedom.

● **Pierre Cruzatte:** A member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition who also played his fiddle to entertain the expedition.

● **Sergeant Charles Floyd:** The only casualty of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He probably died from a burst appendix. **Did you know** he was the first U.S. soldier to die west of the Mississippi River? He was buried with military honors.

● **Seaman:** Meriwether Lewis' big, black Newfoundland dog. On the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Seaman helped by chasing squirrels for dinner and warning the men of approaching grizzlies.

● **Sergeant Patrick Gass:** The last surviving member of the Corp of Discovery. He died in 1870. He was 99 years old.

**e. Name ONE of the American Indian tribes the Lewis and Clark Expedition encountered.** Oto, Missouri, Yankton Sioux, Teton Sioux, Mandan, Hidatas, Shoshone, Nez Percé, and Blackfeet.



The Lewis and Clark Expedition recorded the traditions, manners, and languages of 40 American Indian tribes. Here is a description of some of these tribes:

- **Oto and Missouri Indians:** Lewis and Clark gave them flags, medals, and whisky. They also demonstrated how a compass worked.

- **Yankton Sioux:** Lewis and Clark had a peaceful meeting with them.

- **Teton Sioux:** They first met near present-day Pierre, South Dakota.

- **Mandan:** Farmers and hunters who lived in round, domed houses. About 4,000 Mandans lived in the villages when Lewis and Clark arrived in October, 1804. **Did you know** this is more people than lived in Washington, D.C. at the time? The Mandans were intrigued by York, the first black man they had ever seen.

- **Hidatsa:** They lived near the Mandan. Lewis and Clark stayed near them during the winter of 1804-1805.

- **Shoshone:** They lived near the Rocky Mountains and provided the Lewis and Clark Expedition with horses in 1805. **Did you know** Sacagawea was a Shoshone?

- **Nez Percé:** They lived west of the Rocky Mountains. They supplied the Lewis and Clark Expedition with food and helped them build canoes.

- **Blackfeet:** Lewis and his smaller group of men encountered the Blackfeet on their return trip from the Pacific Ocean. It was a hostile encounter.

#### **f. Make a Lewis and Clark Timeline.**

**August 1, 1770:** William Clark is born in Caroline County, Virginia.

**August 18, 1774:** Meriwether Lewis is born in Albermarle County, Virginia.

**March 6, 1801:** Thomas Jefferson asks Lewis to serve as his personal secretary

**1803:** Lewis agrees to lead exploration of the West and asks Clark to share command with him.

**July 4, 1803:** United States purchases Louisiana Territory from France.

**May 14, 1804:** Corps of Discovery begins trip up Missouri River.

**August 20, 1804:** Sergeant Charles Floyd dies.

**1804:** Trapper Charbonneau signs on with expedition and brings his pregnant wife Sacagawea.

**February 13, 1805:** Jean Baptiste Charbonneau is born.

**November, 1805:** Lewis and Clark reach Pacific Ocean.

**July 26-27, 1806:** Lewis' party encounters Blackfeet.

**September 23, 1806:** Lewis and Clark return to St. Louis.

**October 11, 1809:** Lewis takes his own life near Nashville, Tennessee.

**September 1, 1838:** William Clark dies in St. Louis.